

Chapter 3: DANTES and Distance Learning

Introduction

The Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) is a DOD Education Support Activity. As such, DANTES establishes programs, which are implemented through the Military Services education programs.

References

Throughout this chapter several web links to DANTES sites are referenced. These are important links that each Test Control Officer will use on a regular basis.

DANTES Home Page

http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/danteshome.asp?Flag=True

DANTES Program Examination Handbook

http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/examinations/deph_05.htm?Flag=True

DANTES Catalog of Material:

http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/refpubs/index.htm?Flag=True

DANTES Independent Study Catalog

<http://www.dantescatalogs.com/CounselorDisclaimer.asp?Catalog=DISC&CameFrom=DISC/DISCNav.asp>

DANTES External Degree Program

<http://www.dantescatalogs.com/CounselorDisclaimer.asp?Catalog=DEDC&CameFrom=DEDC/DEDCNav.asp>

DANTES Catalog of Nationally Accredited Distance Learning Programs

<http://www.dantescatalogs.com/CounselorDisclaimer.asp?Catalog=NADLP&CameFrom=NADLP/NADLPNav.asp>

To obtain DANTES publications call DANTES at 850-452-1082, or write DANTES (Code 30J), 6490 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32509-5243.

DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

Establish a DANTES Account

To establish an account, complete the reverse side of *The DANTES Material Request Form* by providing your mailing address, name and title. Use the title of ESO when establishing your account and do not include your name in the official mailing address.

DANTES will assign an identification (ID) number to your command. This four digit number is required on all future orders.

Ordering Materials

To order the desired items, enter the four digit stock number on the order form. Use a number two pencil and grid in the corresponding circle.

Some of the reference publications are not available to the Coast Guard because funding is not available. These publications are noted in the online catalog referenced on page 3-1. Additionally, pay attention to the block "Intended Users". In cases where distribution is restricted to certain target audiences, it will be noted in this area.

Some publications are also available on-line at:

http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/refpubs/index.htm?Flag=True

Services

Many of the programs and services available through DANTES are available to Coast Guard units and members. Some of the programs are available at no charge, the Coast Guard funds some of the programs, and others are not available due to funding constraints. This chapter contains a list of websites on each DANTES sponsored examination and contains information on administration of each program.

Testing

The most popular program administered by DANTES is the Testing Program. It is through this program that Coast Guard members may take the college credit examinations and the college admission examinations. For additional information on the Testing Programs see Chapter 3.

The DANTES Testing Program has operated successfully for a number of years and has gained the trust and respect of the managers of the national testing programs. Therefore, DANTES Test Control Officer's (TCO) have access to numerous academic tests for administration. Thus, any one desiring to administer the DANTES sponsored examinations must complete a fairly rigorous training program. Authority must first be granted to establish a testing center that meets all the DANTES requirements, and then qualified individuals must be appointed, trained, and approved.

DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

Types

There are several examination programs available to USCG personnel free of charge.

| Purpose | Examination Programs |
|----------------------------------|--|
| High School | General Educational Development (GED) Test http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/library/docs/deph/Part2/GED.pdf |
| College Admissions Undergraduate | Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) http://www.collegeboard.org/ American College Testing (ACT) Assessment Test http://www.act.org/ |
| Graduate Admissions | Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) http://www.gre.org Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) http://www.gmat.org/ National Teachers Examination (PRAXIS) http://www.ets.org/praxis |
| College Credit | College Level Examinations (CLEP) (General & Subject) http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/clep/exams.html DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSSTs) http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/examinations/DSST.htm Excelsior College Examination Program (ECEP) http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/examinations/ece.htm ECEP Study Guides: https://www.excelsior.edu/portal/page?_pageid=57,39239&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL |

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DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

Types (continued)

| Purpose | Examination Programs |
|----------------|---|
| Guidance Tests | <p>Strong Interest Inventory</p> <p>Career Planning Program</p> <p>Holland's Self-Directed Search</p> <p>Career Assessment Inventory</p> <p>Kuder Occupational Interest Survey</p> <p>Campbell Interest and Skill Survey</p> <p>Academic Skills Assessment Test (TABE)</p> <p>http://www.dantes.doded.mil/Dantes_web/counselorsupport/index.asp</p> |
| Certification | <p>Over 30 different exams available. For more information visit http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/certification/deph/pt3/index.htm The Coast Guard <u>does not</u> pay for these exams.</p> |

DANTES Test Centers

To locate the nearest DANTES Test Center, go to the following website:
http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/apps/testcenters/TestCenterLookup.asp

Test Preparation

Most of these tests are designed to help the student document existing knowledge.

For each of the examinations there is a fact sheet or study guide that provides an outline of the test, sample questions and answers and a list of reference textbooks. Members should review the fact sheet, complete the sample questions; and, depending on knowledge level, obtain the reference publications and study as necessary prior to testing. Roughly speaking, members who answer at least two-thirds of the questions correctly on the fact sheet have a good chance of passing the test. These are located at *CG Central > Learning Tab > College Degree Programs > DANTES Distance Learning Programs*

Videotapes, audiotapes, and a few multi-media programs are also available to help prepare members for the tests. About 40 programs are available. For additional information, see the "College Video/Audio Courses," Volume 4 of this publication. The publication is also available on the CGI website at

http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/cgi/eso/eso_guide_v4.asp

DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

DANTES Test Control Officer DANTES TCOs must undergo a training program and pass an examination before DANTES acknowledges their appointment as a TCO and advises the testing agencies to honor requests for tests.

Training can be accomplished two ways:

1. by attending the DANTES TCO workshop held in Pensacola, FL and at various regional locations, or
2. by viewing the video, "Security Is Your Responsibility."

All prospective TCOs are encouraged to attend the workshop as it provides the best overall training. If the TCO candidate attends the workshop, the required exam (Examination for DANTES Testing Personnel) will be given at that time.

All other candidates will take the open book exam on their own. Both the exam (graded at the Institute when received with the appointment letter) and appointment letter are sent to DANTES via the Coast Guard Institute. A sample appointment letter is provided in the DANTES Examination Program Handbook CD (*DEPH*) or on the DANTES web site:

http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/examinations/deph_05.htm?Flag=True Click on "Part I"

Besides being trained, the TCO must meet other requirements:

1. Have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college recognized by the U.S. Dept of Education (This requirement may be waived by the Service headquarters (Coast Guard Institute)).
2. Be either a noncommissioned officer (E-6 and above), a commissioned officer, a warrant officer, or a federal civil service employee.
3. Reflect authority to serve in the official position.

In addition to the TCO, it is recommended that the unit have an Alternate Test Control Officer (ATCO) to assist the TCO or to administer tests in the TCOs absence. The ATCO must undergo the same requirements as the TCO. Some high volume units may also have a proctor or examiner to assist with the demands of the job.

DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

Establishing a DANTES Test Center

The desire to establish a center is a strong beginning, but setting up a successful test center requires commitment from the unit's commanding officer, the unit itself, and the future DANTES TCO. It is not a project to enter into lightly for it takes thoroughness, concentrated effort, knowledge, and dedication on the part of the TCO to make the program run smoothly.

There are several reasons to establish a DANTES Test Center. These issues need to be addressed when the unit submits an appointment letter.

1. High level of interest by unit personnel
2. A geographic location that makes traveling to other DANTES Test Centers inconvenient to service members, or
3. Lack of accessibility to an established test center.

Active duty Coast Guard members and reservists may test at any DANTES Test Center. Coast Guard spouses and may test at Coast Guard test centers, Air/Army National Guard centers, and reserve centers **only**.

Effective 1 April 2004, Coast Guard personnel (including spouses and civilians) may elect to test at national test centers when taking the CLEP exams.

Features of DANTES Test Centers

DANTES requires a testing room that includes the following features:

- 1) Good lighting
- 2) Ventilated and quiet
- 3) Adequate seating space between participants
- 4) Used only for testing at the time of testing, and
- 5) Adequate seating.

In addition to the testing room, the test center must have a security container in which to store the testing materials. A metal file cabinet equipped with a steel lock bar and service/approved three numeral combination dial padlock, a metal file cabinet equipped with a built-in combination lock, or an upright safe or vault are generally acceptable.

DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

DANTES Distance Learning Program

The DANTES Distance Learning Program provides a wide range of nontraditional education programs critical for Service members who need alternatives to fulfill degree requirements when classroom courses are unavailable or when work schedules or duty locations do not permit class attendance.

DANTES provides undergraduate and graduate academic courses from over 20 institutions. Other courses are oriented toward a non-degree seeking or technically oriented student. Courses are available to personnel in all Military Services.

What kinds of programs are available?

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| High School Courses | 21 accredited institutions |
| College Courses | More than 6,000 courses |
| Graduate Courses | 19 accredited institutions |
| Post-secondary Credit-by-Exam courses | 77 subject areas |

Resource

DANTES Independent Study Catalog (DISC). Order the catalog from DANTES using the DANTES Material Request Form (DANTES 1561/5). The Catalog is also available on-line at <http://www.dantescatalogs.com/DISC/DISCNav.asp>.

The ***DANTES Independent Study Catalog (DISC)*** lists more than 6,000 high schools, undergraduate and graduate level, and examination preparation correspondence courses that are available from 48 regionally accredited institutions. Subjects range from astronomy to zoology. Courses can transfer here needed to complete degree requirements. Ensure that the academic code corresponds to the SOC category code as noted on the degree plan. For additional information see the chapter on degree planning.

Course Delivery

Affiliated schools use an array of low- to high-tech delivery choices aimed at individual students, worldwide. Although textbooks, pen and paper continue to be a standard of distance learning, advances in technology allow a variety of fast and efficient delivery systems. Many schools encourage the use of E-mail to submit and receive course lessons and papers or to communicate directly with instructors or admission offices. In these classes, assignments can go directly from the student's computer to the instructor's in seconds. Others rely on computers for class interaction among students. Many use the Internet to deliver instruction on line, and several rely on satellite or cable delivery methods. Usually, schools allow nine to 12 months to complete the course.

DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

Enrollment

Students may discuss goals with education counselors and the courses needed to meet those goals. Consult the catalogs described above, as well as specific distance learning catalogs from individual schools.

1. Verify that the course selected will meet personal needs and will be accepted toward desired degrees.
 2. Complete the school's enrollment form. Most of the schools have on-line enrollment. The URL is listed in the institutional pages of the catalog. USCG does not use the DANTES enrollment process and form. Additionally, all schools have open enrollment so students can enroll when desired without waiting for the term to start.
 3. The school will send books and lesson materials to the student.
 4. When students complete the final lesson, the school will send a grade report to the student.
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Tuition Assistance (TA)

Since most distance learning courses allow the student several months to complete the course, tuition assistance will be paid when the student successfully completes the course. When the course is completed eligible USCG members, shall submit the following documents to the CGI to claim reimbursement:

1. [USCG Form 4147](#), "Application for Off-Duty Assistance"
2. Receipt showing dollars paid
3. Extract from the catalog showing tuition charges and a copy of the grade report

When the institution's catalog lists that the course must be completed in 18 weeks or less, tuition assistance may be provided at the time of course enrollment. In these rare situations, the documents listed below shall be submitted to the USCG Institute:

1. [USCG Form 4147](#), "Application for Off-Duty Assistance"
2. Documentation from the institution confirming that the course must be completed within the 18-week window

When the TA is approved, a "TA Authorization Form" will be issued to the student. This form should accompany the enrollment package to the institution. For additional information on applying for TA, please see the Tuition Assistance Instruction (COMDTINST M1500.24 series).

DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

Fees and Services

Costs vary for each course and institution. Fee information is found on the institutional information page within each of the DANTES Independent Study Catalogs. These include: DANTES Independent Study Catalog, External Degree Catalog and Catalog of Nationally Accredited Distance Learning Programs. Links to the above catalogs can be found on page 2-1.

Customer service from the participating schools have agreed to the following:

- Provide rapid turnaround time for initial ordering and distribution of course materials and for grading lessons and examinations.
- Provide transcript services to the Military student in accordance with policies set forth in the school's catalog.
- Students may enroll whenever desired.

Textbooks

There are usually three texts associated with a typical independent study course.

- Normal textbook
- A study guide provides the student with essentially the same information as the instructor provides in the classroom.
- A syllabus guides the student through the course. The syllabus contains written assignments that the student completes and mails to the instructor to grade.

Some courses are enhanced through supplemental videocassettes, audiocassettes, or computer software.

Written Assignments

The number of written assignments varies from college to college. Some may have multiple-choice questions while others have essay questions. The number of written assignments per course is listed in the DISC.

Exams

The number of exams varies. Some colleges require a final examination, some a mid-term and a final, and others require 3 to 4 proctored examinations. The number of exams per course is listed in the DISC.

Who should take an Independent Study Course?

- Those who have previously taken college courses or correspondence course
- Those who need specific courses to meet degree requirements
- Those who wish to meet personal growth objectives
- Those who need specific skills for career advancement
- Those who have successfully completed other correspondence courses

Selecting the Student's *First* Independent Study Course

- Select a reading-oriented course, e.g., psychology, sociology, history, political science, or business.
 - Avoid accounting, English composition, math, and science courses unless the student has a special background in that area.
 - If working toward a specific degree, check with that institution to ensure that the selected course will satisfy the degree requirement and be accepted in transfer.
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DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

Tips for Success with External Degree Programs

1. Develop a plan for completing the course and put that plan on paper. Set aside specific hours for study.
 2. Work in an atmosphere that allows you to study effectively.
 3. Include milestones to be reached by a specific time.
 4. Check progress periodically; build the checkpoints into the plan.
 5. Check the plan against the course outline and study guide provided by the school. Ensure the plan is realistic when compared to work scheduled and other obligations.
 6. Submit the first lesson as soon as possible.
 7. Review all graded/returned lessons in the first part of your study session and review text materials to ensure an understanding of the concepts presented in past chapters.
 8. Discuss what you learned with someone else. Discussing new information enhances learning.
 9. Try to enroll in the same course with two or three friends. Form a study team and meet as often as possible, at least twice a week.
 10. Find someone with knowledge in the subject area; use that person as a resource to talk with about the course.
 11. Make contact with your instructors. Let them know of special problems or questions you have as early as possible.
 12. Complete lessons and examinations as required by the school. Ensure all work is clearly written.
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DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

SkillSoft (SmartForce) Courses

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|----------------------------|---|
| Registration | <p>The member must be enrolled in a SkillSoft (SmartForce) course. The first time the member enrolls in a course, the member registers using a Coast Guard workstation. The member shall be listed on the global listing. If not, contact the SkillSoft administrator at Yorktown for assistance. The web site to register for the course is http://cgweb.tcyorktown.uscg.mil/sfweb/.</p> <p>Once enrolled, the member may access the course through any computer with Internet access by logging on to www.skillsoft.com and using the password provided at registration. The proctored exam will be registered under this person's name and password.</p> |
| Eligibility | <p>CG active duty members, CG Reservists, CG civilians, and CG Auxiliaries.</p> |
| Course Completion | <p>The member shall work through each component of the course. The components of the course prepare the member for the final exam. The component test will allow the member to determine knowledge of that particular section. If the member does well on the component test, he/she should proceed to the next section.</p> <p>Upon completion of all components of a particular course, the member may practice for the exam by selecting the study mode. The study mode allows the member to practice as long as desired.</p> |
| Proctoring an Exam: | <p>To receive credit for the examination, the final exam must be proctored. The proctor for the exam may be the ESO, DANTES Test Control Officer (TCO), or the commanding officer if the unit does not have an ESO or TCO.</p> <p>At the time of testing, the member shall present a government identification card. The member should not bring items into the testing room while taking the exam. This includes cell phones, programmable calculators, textbooks, manuals, notes etc. Test proctors should also be cognizant that some types of watches contain programmable calculators and/or video screens. Such a watch shall not be allowed in the testing room. The member and proctor must complete the <i>SkillSoft (Smart Force) College Credit Verification Form CGI-1567</i> (Figure 2-1).</p> |

DANTES and Distance Learning (continued)

SkillSoft (SmartForce) Courses(continued)

College Credit Upon completion of the test, the member receives a grade report. Upon passing the exam, the proctor attaches the computer generated score report to the *SkillSoft College Credit Verification Form CGI-1567* (see Figure 2-2-1). The score on the two forms must match in order to receive credit.

A score of 70% or higher is required to receive credit. If the member does not pass the exam, the member may review the material and retake the exam.

Obtaining a Transcript

1. The ESO will send to the CGI the computer generated score report and the *SkillSoft College Credit Verification Form CGI-1567* (see Figure 2-2-1) along with an *Application for Voluntary Education Services* (see Figure 1-1)
2. The CGI staff will enter the scores and will be viewable to the student in the unofficial student transcript.
3. The CGI will forward the scores to the ACE registry so an official transcript can be issued when requested by the student.
4. The student will request from ACE an official ACE transcript. There is no fee to the student for this transcript. To apply for a transcript follow this link: <https://www.acenet.edu/transcripts/index.cfm>

The CGI is not authorized to list the ACE National Credit on the official transcript. The member will contact the ACE CREDIT call center at 202-939-9434 for an official transcript. There is no fee for the service. The member must state that they are with the Coast Guard for the no fee transcript

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY U.S. COAST GUARD INSTITUTE CGI 1567 (01/06) | <h2 style="text-align: center;">SkillSoft College</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Credit Verification Form</h3> | |
| <i>Student Data</i> | | |
| Student Name | | |
| Student E-mail address | | |
| Social Security Number | | |
| Date of Birth | | |
| Home Address | | |
| City | | |
| State | | |
| Zip Code | | |
| Employer | | |
| Employer Address | | |
| Employer City | | |
| Employer State | | |
| Employer Zip Code | | |
| | | |
| Proctor Data | | |
| Proctor Name | | |
| Proctor E-mail address | | |
| Employer | | |
| Department | | |
| Address | | |
| City | | |
| State | | |
| Zip Code | | |
| <i>Telephone Number</i> | | |
| Fax Number | | |
| <p>To receive college credit for the SkillSoft courses, the student must complete a proctored certification exam. When the student successfully passes the test, the student and the proctor both sign this form including the date and score. The computer generated score report shall also be attached to this page. Signatures on this page certify the accuracy of the data submitted.</p> <p>Student signature _____ Date _____ Score _____</p> <p>Proctor signature _____ Date _____ Score _____</p> <p>Exam Name _____ Exam Number _____</p> | | |

Figure 3-1-1